

gation is, of course, the contagiousness of the disease, and the committee would here put on record their profound conviction, if ever a learned society committed a blunder which was near akin to a crime, it was the Royal College of Physicians of England, when, in order to gratify the vanity of a few doctrinaires and glorify the great British doctrine of free trade in disease, as well as in all other commodities, it adopted the report of the committee which declared leprosy non-contagious, and thus stamped with the seal of its immense authority the most damnable medical heresy of modern times. The complete apathy which followed the promulgation of this declaration in all parts of her Majesty's dominions with regard to the segregation of the disease was as astonishing in fact as it was mournful in results. All precautions were thrown to the winds. Barriers between the clean and the unclean were broken down. And, now, mark! The first of the two works of Arch-Deacon Wright, to which I have alluded, was published in 1885, the second in 1889. In the former he reports the number of lepers in British India at 120,000, in the latter at 131,618, according to the official returns, but adds that those who know India well, place it at not less than 250,000, while many contend that half a million would scarcely cover the number of these unfortunates. And here let us say, parenthetically, as a fact which comes very near home to us, that Dr. Leloir, clinical professor of diseases of the skin at Lisle, and author of a "*Traite Partique et Theorique de la Lepre*," expresses the belief, as the result of his observations and inquiries, that there are more lepers, in proportion to the population, in the West Indies, than in the East Indies. Such are the consequences of the non-protective policy in leprosy. Now let us glance for a moment at an experiment in the opposite direction. The government of Norway, where the disease was an actually present evil, did not allow itself to be carried away by the new-fangled theory of the English dermatologists. On the contrary, it not only continued to keep its leper popu-